



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

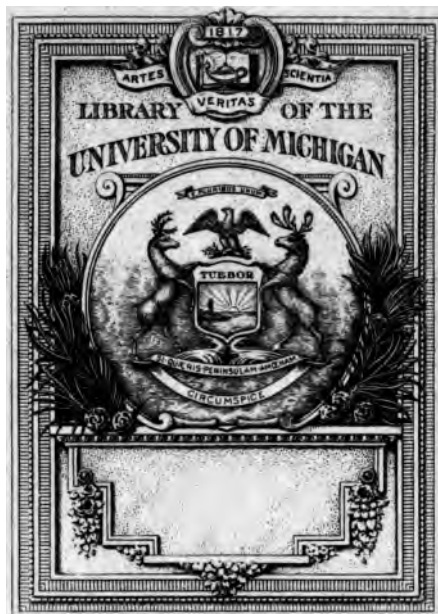
### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

E

165  
.M69

A 401476











65  
169

*Chas. H. Ames.*

A DISCOURSE  
ON  
THE STATE AND PROSPECTS  
OF  
AMERICAN LITERATURE;  
DELIVERED AT SCHENECTADY,  
July 24th, 1821,  
BEFORE THE NEW-YORK ALPHA  
OF THE  
PHI-BETA-KAPPA  
SOCIETY.

---

BY THE HONORABLE  
SAMUEL L. MITCHILL, M. D. LL. D.  
&c. &c.

---

*ALBANY:*

PRINTED BY WEBSTERS AND SKINNERS,  
At their Bookstore, in the White House, corner of State and Pearl Streets.

---

1821.



1135

E  
165  
1769

1135

Libr.  
Houghton  
3-17-36  
31936

At the Anniversary Meeting of the New-York Alpha of  
the Phi-Beta-Kappa, July 24, 1821,

IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED, That the thanks of  
this Society be presented to the Hon. SAMUEL L. MITCH-  
ILL, M. D. LL. D. &c. &c. for his learned and eloquent  
oration this day delivered by him at their request ; and

RESOLVED, That the Rev. *John Chester* and the Rev.  
*Samuel Blatchford*, D. D. be a committee to wait upon  
Dr. Mitchill with this resolution, and request of him a  
copy for the press.

Attest,

F. WAYLAND, Jun. *Rec. Sec'y.*

The undersigned have the honor to present the above  
resolution, and beg leave to urge upon you a compliance  
with the earnest wishes of the Society.

JOHN CHESTER,  
SAMUEL BLATCHFORD.

Hon. Dr. MITCHILL.



## A DISCOURSE, &c.

---

MR. PRESIDENT—GENTLEMEN :

THERE is something peculiarly agreeable in meeting the patrons and favorites of literature on this auspicious occasion. The season is favourable. The physical elements are properly apportioned and arranged. The moral world enjoys a repose, which until latterly, had been denied it, for more than twenty years. Enough of contending nations, and of sanguinary conflicts ; of the elevation and fall of sovereigns and of states, has been afforded, to satisfy if not to sate the strongest appetite. With the termination of those grand and interesting exhibitions, we necessarily lose the occupation and the entertainment they afforded. We are now invited to another spectacle ; though less magnificent and imposing than Europe has presented. It is the calm and deliberate survey of ourselves. When there are no battles or conflagrations abroad to excite our curiosity, there may be leisure, and perhaps, inclination, to examine our condition at home.

A time of peace gives scope and room for such inquiries. Preparations are making for a convention to amend the political constitution of the commonwealth. It may be rationally expected, that in addition to the security of our rights and privileges,

and the more satisfactory distribution of the powers of the government, care will be taken to promote the great interests of that sound learning which has a direct connection with the public happiness.

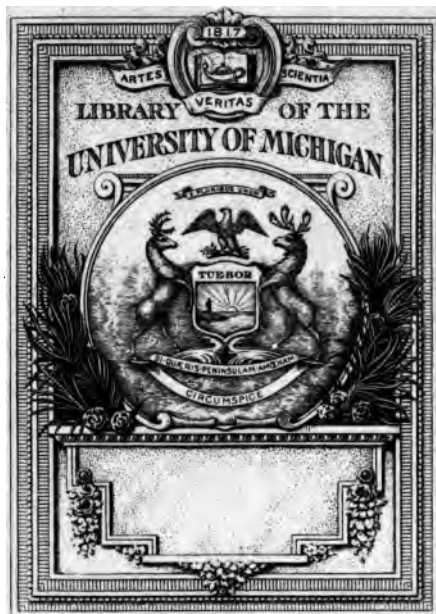
During the transatlantic commotion, numbers of valuable articles were driven to our shores. Booksellers brought their literary stock, and enabled us to furnish our shelves, with productions, that in the usual course of orders and importations, would have taken a much longer time to reach us. By the sequestration of voluminous libraries, some of their good materials have found their way hither. Under the pressure, or persecution of the times, many accomplished men seized, when on the point of emigration, such literary and scientific treasure as they could bring along. In the course of these events, coins, medals, statues, paintings, and the choicest works of art, have been introduced. Above all, men have been introduced, many of whom visit our land temporarily, while others have chosen it as the place of their permanent abode, adding thereunto the invaluable account of their knowledge and acquirements. The storm from the east, has wafted, in short, an abundance of precious things to these western regions. We read that on the overthrow of the Byzantine empire, the stores of learning were distributed over Italy and upon all the places with which Venice, Florence, and Rome had connection. History also teaches us, that the *tyrannical cruelty* of the ruling powers in France

and Belgium, compelled the fugitive to seek an asylum in milder governments. So at a more recent period, suffering humanity has sought a shelter, with all it could bring of mind and of property, in the United States. The acquirements and the skill, the *καὶ οὐ μόνον*, of the more accomplished emigrants have greatly overbalanced the idleness and vice of others.

Should illustrations be demanded I am ready to shew, that the manufacture of types, the use of them in printing, the preparation of paper and the labours of authorship, have all been promoted by intelligent foreigners who have settled among us. It would be quite as easy to point out the places they have held and now worthily occupy in our seats of learning. And their example and influence in their professional and other situations, have materially contributed to the advancement of literary and scientific objects.

By these observations I do not intend to overlook or undervalue the native genius of my countrymen. Acute, industrious, inventive, versatile, patient, enterprising and calculating, as the case requires, they are capable of excelling in every thing they undertake.

It might have been expected that among the powers vested in congress, there would have been found a provision for public instruction, either directly expressed or fairly implied. The opinion of several patriotic men has been given warmly in







Cass to the unfrequented regions washed by lakes Michigan and Superior, and watered by the streams running through the lands situated southward and westward of those capacious reservoirs ; and under Major Long to the rivers that feed the greedy Mississippi, by order of the enlightened Calhoun, the secretary at war. They and their learned associates have enlarged our knowledge of North America in a thousand important particulars.

In the midst of all these proceedings, the exertions of a foreign government, to cultivate the natural sciences in the United States, deserves to be honorably noticed. The monarchy of France, wielded by the 16th Lewis, the first and fastest friend of these nascent states, patronized and employed the two Micheauxs. To them, the worthy father, and the no less worthy son, we are indebted for a correct description and systematic arrangement of the forest trees, and other plants which diversify and distinguish this quarter of the globe.— But that sovereignty is not satisfied with the investigation of our botany. Our zoology, since the days of Gordon and Linneus, had attracted the notice of Schaepef, Barton, Box, and a few others, who made excellent beginnings. The amiable and charming Wilson, who could soar on the wings of Pegasus, has figured and described our birds in his American ornithology. Another citizen, who unsuccessfully aspired to the distinction of riding like Arion, on the dolphin's back, has attempted an essay on our

ichthyology. Still our country is rich in new and undescribed animals. Louis the XVIIIth has undertaken to investigate them. Through his minister plenipotentiary, the erudite and accomplished Neville, and the president of his scientific academy, the far-famed La Cépède, his majesty has signified his intentions. The constellation of worthies who administer the king's museum and garden, are busily engaged in researches touching the history of the animals inhabiting our land and our waters. By the industry and talents of Milbert and Le Sueur, every creature they can find is described, figured, dissected, and where judged expedient, sent dead or alive to Paris. No expense is spared. Nothing is left unexplored that they and their assistants can achieve. That government considers the cultivation of these sciences as a matter of a highly serious nature. The book of directions for travellers and persons employed in the colonies, extends to nearly forty pages in quarto. It was compiled by the gentlemen who have the administration of the king's museum of natural history, at the request of the minister of the marine, and may therefore be considered as a great state paper. Their zoological researches are not confined to the beings actually alive. They extend to the races supposed to be no longer inhabitants of this world; to the departed tribes whose remains are only found in the layers of our soil and rocks. Such organic relics have been significantly denominated the medals of nature;

by the reading and interpretation of which, we gain curious information concerning the beings who have preceded us in this sublunary abode ; and who, after having fulfilled the purposes of their creation, exist no more, and are known to us only by their shells, bones, teeth, and other parts that have resisted the agents of destruction.

The grand features of our geology had been ably depicted by Maclure ; but the subject of organic remains, which required more elaborate investigation than he could bestow, was left for his successors. And this department of the science, which can be fully disentangled and elucidated by zoology alone, is actually in a train of prosperous development.

We see thus the assistance which has been afforded to our literature and science by the persons whom the general government has employed, by emigrants from foreign parts, and by the agents of a powerful and friendly sovereign. But before I proceed any further, I crave the permission to state how the rags of Europe aid the cause of learning in America. Some years ago it was made known to me, in my capacity of chairman to the standing committee of commerce and manufactures in the house of representatives, that certain paper-mills were standing still, not through lack of capital, but for want of stock. So much greater was the consumption of paper in this community of readers and *writers*, than the amount of raw material, that I

carried up the report, since enacted into a statute, recommending an exemption from impost, for all rags whatsoever. By this proceeding, I sometimes thought I rendered more service to learning, to freedom and the press, than by all the other doings of my life.

From the view that has been taken, we learn, that the several states are the great seats of literature and science in the United States; and in these, the efforts are made partly by public endowment, and partly by private munificence. There will be delight and edification in recounting a few particulars.

It has been asked, what are the encouragements to learning, afforded by congress, in the disposition of the public lands through the extended territories of the west? The answer is so honorable and satisfactory, that every freeman will rejoice to hear it.

The section No. 16, in every township, as we are told by the learned and patriotic commissioner of the general land-office, is, by law, reserved for the support of schools. The southeast corner of that section is the centre of each township. More than sixty million acres have been laid out. One thirty-sixth part of sixty millions, is one million six hundred and sixty-six acres, reserved for the aforesaid purpose.

That this statement may be comprehended, it may be proper to observe, that a township is a square, whose sides (limited by true meridians and *parallels* to the equator) are each six miles long.

making an area of thirty-six square miles. In a township, there are thirty-six sections of one mile square. A township contains twenty-three thousand and forty acres ; and consequently a section consists of six hundred and forty acres. A quarter section makes a farm of one hundred and sixty acres.

The section No. 16, will unquestionably be reserved in all future sales of the public lands. For colleges and seminaries of a higher grade than schools, thirteen whole townships have already been granted to Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and elsewhere. Thirteen townships are equal to two hundred and ninety-nine thousand five hundred and twenty acres. It may be expected the same legislative liberality will be extended to all future territories and states. Two hundred thousand acres were, by special provision, (of April 18, 1806) appropriated to colleges and academies in Tennessee alone.

In the state of Ohio, the thirty-sixth part of the surveyed portion ( $\frac{1}{36}$ th of 14,400,000 acres) amounts to four hundred thousand. The progress of population and settlement has long ago given to No. 16 a value of at least four dollars an acre. Whereby it appears that at a low appraisement, the consecrated lands in that commonwealth alone are worth one million and six hundred thousand dollars. They may be fairly rated higher ; for there are instances in which the sixteenth section would sell for twenty or even thirty dollars an acre.

This generosity is honorable to the nation. Freedom is the destiny and birth-right of this people. To be free, there must be instruction, information, knowledge; and to attain these, time and an exemption from labor are necessary. The provision made by the bounty and foresight of our general government will secure that enjoyment to the latest posterity, or as long as the possessors shall consider it a blessing. History furnishes nothing similar to this.

Let us next look at the literary and scientific exertions in the respective states.

In New-York, our own happy republic, legislative patronage has been great and reiterated. The grants to the learned and thriving seminary, under whose auspices we are now assembled, have changed the residence of the Mohawks into a seat of useful and elegant learning. And the structures, the libraries, the apparatus, and every thing that I discover, evince that the trustees of Union College have been good stewards of the funds entrusted to them. The amount of money and lands given to the regents of the university, and to various colleges and academies, including the medical establishment at New-York city, evince public spirit and generosity of an exalted character in the legislature. To all which is to be added the fund for the better support of common schools, producing an annual income of 80,000 dollars.

It ought to be said, and I seize the opportunity of repeating a sentiment, frequently uttered before, that our rulers have done worthy and noble things. And, if the persons who are called to execute trusts, and to perform the duties of instructors, will, by their exertion, care and ability, carry into complete effect the intentions of their patrons and benefactors, every thing substantial and every thing ornamental that comes within the scope of the general instruction, befitting our age and country, must issue like rills from our seminaries, and irrigate every corner of the republic.

Connecticut is entitled to the merit of providing for elementary as well as for collegiate instruction. Her sagacious and intelligent statesmen knew the importance of enabling the citizens to understand their duties and rights; to keep a book of accounts; to vote at elections, and to read the old and new testaments. And they further understood the value of that more extended and diversified course which embraces the languages spoken in ancient days, and in distant lands; the properties of matter, which, by investigation, give rise to physical science and to the chemical and mechanical arts; and also, the rules of reasoning, whereby man discovers that he is not only an intellectual, but an accountable creature. In all these ways, they graduated education to the situation and condition of the seeking individual; and set admirable examples to the neighboring states.



In Massachusetts, solicitude for the interests of learning is nearly coeval with the commonwealth. There the alma mater at Cambridge, was protected in a peculiar manner by the constitution. A well administered charter not only received the fostering care of the general court, but donations of money, books, specimens and apparatus, from liberal individuals, to a number and to an amount which no other institution can boast. By her encouragement and support, her sons go forth like bees from the hive, and ranging over the fields of learning in both hemispheres, return loaded with the rich sweets they have gathered. I feel proud in mentioning such acts of public spirit; and prouder in owning my conviction, that they have already added to the talent and virtue of the age.

In the other parts of New-England we behold the rulers and the people, also making efforts to accumulate, diffuse and perpetuate knowledge.— Rhode-Island, New-Hampshire and Vermont, have their respective institutions for promoting literature and science; under which geometry, rhetoric, poetry, oratory and history, are studied in the writings of the great masters which Greece and Italy produced; and the other branches of knowledge, according to the most approved models and authorities.

New-Jersey has contributed a just proportion to the elegant and useful learning of the age. For



among the alumni of her colleges, are some of the most accomplished and patriotic of our citizens.

In Pennsylvania, the fact of newspapers, almanacks and advertisements, published in German, proves the attention, by the present generation, to the language of their forefathers. While the Friends and the United Brethren, make exertions in their several ways. By these and by other societies and individuals, instruction is afforded in various modes, from the Madrass or Hindoo method of exercising the pupils in sand, to the elevated contemplations of philosophical societies.

Look to Delaware and Maryland, and behold the progress and spread of knowledge from the Atlantic ocean to the Allegany mountains. The Chesapeake, on both its shores, exhibits establishments for instruction, creditable to their founders and instructors. It is remarkable, however, that its benefits are too generally withheld from the sable variety of the human race. The negroes and their descendants are doomed to an inferior station among us. Degraded to the condition of chattels, they have lost, in a considerable degree, the character of persons. The white master claims a superiority in rank and blood, in capacity and talent, in complexion and feature, over his black slave. The ascendancy he has gained, he is determined to maintain. If slaves are sent to school, there is a positive expense, and a loss of productive labor. There is besides an acquirement of knowledge that unfits

him for servitude. Man has been prone, in all ages, to submit to the dominion of his fellow creature. This subserviency existed in ancient times, and among the most distinguished nations. For it is not correct to affirm, that one subjugates the many ; but that the multitude acquiesce in the government of the few. There is something in the negro temperament that gives up to the dominion of others, more readily than any people that mingle with us. Unhappily that abject and abused race has been introduced ; and, in some parts is so connected with agricultural labor and profit, that there is no prospect of its speedy removal. In the difficult case which this sort of slavery produces, it may be expected the principal part of these low individuals will be kept in alienism and ignorance. It is not so, however, with the persons of colour, living to the northward of the states now under consideration. There, where few or no slaves exist, the children of blacks may receive instruction as well as the offspring of the whites. In some places there are schools for their particular tuition—where the children shew a capacity equal to the descendants of Europeans.

But why should I enlarge ? Virginia in addition to her former exertions, is now engaged with ample funds and talents, in the erection of an university upon an extensive and modern plan. South Carolina has already done the like, with an endowment worthy of her wealth and her spirit. Georgia has

been worthily occupied in a similar work, and made useful and honourable progress. And the university of Transylvania, seems really, by the celerity of its rise, and the numbers which it attracts, to have surpassed the expectations of its own friends in Kentucky.

I congratulate you on the growing attention and care bestowed upon the instruction of ladies. The christian religion confers upon woman, the consideration, due to her condition. In our own country, the decorum of the times places her very high in the rank of social beings. I consider the land we inhabit as that in which the fair sex, upon the whole, enjoy more solicitude, affection and sentimental regard, than in any other. And so they ought. From our mothers and nurses we learn the earliest and most impressive lessons of our lives. It is under their tuition, the plastic constitution of infancy, and the docile temperament of childhood, receive the moulding or bias. And with this, a most interesting period of life, and I may say of education, they are delivered over to male teachers. Even then, however, female precept and example continues its influence ; and the pedagogue and the professor have but a divided empire over the mind. I argue from this, the importance of female education. As we value right impressions, correct notions, and just habits in early life, let us take a corresponding care of the persons who are the chief instruments in forming them : It strikes me as a matter of the utmost moment.

Think of the characters that may be impressed on a tender mind after having been soothed by words like these.

Soft, my babe, I did not chide thee  
 Though my song might sound too hard ;  
 'Tis thy mother sits beside thee  
 And her arms shall be thy guard.

It may be expected they will be indelible and will last for life. By all means then labour to render them fair and good.

The schools of medicine now flourishing in different cities, are highly characteristic of the times. Education to that profession includes a considerable share of learning, as well as of natural science. The curative, the operative and the doctrinal branches are taught with the requisite ability. The diseases of mind and body are profoundly studied. The virtues of remedies and their manner of producing changes in the symptoms, are as particularly investigated. The bedlamite ; the patient consuming with fever or tortured by pain ; the sufferer by casualties and way-faring accidents ; the lame, the blind, and the disabled of every kind, are the objects of prescription and regimen. Such indeed is the supply, that every family ; yea, more, every individual, may enjoy the comfort of being attended by a competent member of the healing art.

Another memorable establishment of the age, is the American Bible Society, with its auxillaries. Through their instrumentality the written revelation from Heaven, through Moses, and the prophets :

and by Christ Jesus, his disciples, apostles, evangelists and other servants, is sent forth far and wide among the people. These books of inspiration may be perused at home, as well as at church. Their contents may claim the study of the solitary seeker no less than of the public preacher. The pages containing the amazing truths of immortality and eternal life are displayed before the eyes of every reader. There he learns that existence here is but a prelude or preparation to another and different state hereafter.

The freedom of the press is the passport to knowledge as well as the safeguard of liberty. It is so secured by the constitution that nothing can shake it, save such a tremendous commotion as shall overthrow our social fabric. It is curious to witness the many new devices which the mechanical genius of our people has contrived. Determined to amend to the uttermost the typographic art, they are incessantly exercising their invention to perform better work, or to save time and labour. There is no department of business, where the progress of improvement, by means of the presiding head and the executing hand, pleases me so much as in this ; because I perceive in it the determination to enjoy liberty, and the method of perpetuating it to our most distant successors ; but I discern more. A free people ought to be a wise and a virtuous people. A free press affords them opportunities of at once enlarging the understanding and bettering the heart. Happy the land, whose inhabitants cultivate

morality and piety, while they become adepts in physical and natural things !

The general Post-Office deserves to be specially noticed on this occasion. It puts as it were into the hand of every citizen, a speaking-trumpet, through which he may address any person whom he pleases within our widely-extended domain, and even beyond its limits. The length of road over which the mail is conveyed, is greater by far, *cæteris paribus*, than in any other country. The frequency of deputy post-offices is more than in any other government. The post-masters themselves, eminently partake of the intelligence they receive and distribute. The celerity of the transmission is truly admirable, whether accomplished by that most useful of all drudges, the horse, or by the enormous yet manageable power of steam. And the cheapness of the charges affords facilities to literary and scientific communications, which ought to make every votary of both wish duration to a government which may be said to give feet to knowledge and wings to learning.

What in the whole circle of civilization equals the number of gazettes or sheets of information published in our land? The ancients, the Greeks and Romans, for example, among whom manuscripts, and those few and costly too, could be procured by the wealthy only, were obliged to learn events and opinions from noisy rhapsodists, sophists and declaimers. Printing has, in a great degree, superseded the functions of these persons

and the eye is substituted for the ear. By a very curious transfer of a function from one sense to another, we now discourse as familiarly of seeing the news, as our predecessors did of hearing it. A modern reading-room is a practical exercise upon the principles; where, during profound silence, the organs of sight derive ideas of words and of things from the cut and lettered leaf, and convey them directly to the seat of thought.

It is by virtue of the vicarious duty performed in this manner, that schools have been established in this and several other states, for those individuals of our race, amounting, according to a very probable estimate, to one or two thousand, who are deaf and dumb. In these seminaries, you see the persevering benevolence of our citizens. Not satisfied with affording instruction to the individuals who can hear and speak, they are determined to convey it to the sensorium that is inaccessible to sound. If there is an obstacle that professional skill can remove, it will be taken out of the way. If the impediment is insuperable, the road will be made to bend round it. Beautiful is the turn, where a perfect sense accommodates the imperfect, and like an open highway or avenue in the neighborhood of another, rendered impassible by excavations made, or bridges removed by the floods, performs the service of two roads, and allows double travelling to be done. By such an arrangement, by a route somewhat more circuitous, but safe and good, ideas *reach the mind*, and carry the warmth and radiance

of information to the darkened soul. This resolution to instruct the deaf and dumb, is strongly significant of our people, who will never feel satisfied until every citizen capable of being taught, shall know his rights as a man, and his duty to God.

More has been achieved. The zeal for enlarging and cultivating the mind, has reached the indigenous man. The benefits of instruction have been tendered to the Lenni Cennapi, the Mingoes, and other native tribes. How pleasing to behold a Gambold and her husband gathering the little Cherokees into a school-house, and explaining to them the meaning of letters! How interesting the labors of Hawkins, to reclaim the half naked and famished Muskogeese, by teaching them the arts—how to raise cotton; how, by the successive operations of the cards, the spindle and the shuttle, that soft and filamentous production can be converted into cloth; how the scissors, the needle and the bodkin are employed; the harmonious effect of musick, and the decorous association of the sexes in the figured dance; the comfort derived from holding lands, to some extent at least, in severalty; of having a fixed abode; of cultivating bread-corn and grasses; and rearing and multiplying the animals who will contribute their strength, and, when needed, their lives to man! What amiable traits of disposition mark the missionaries, who, failing the aborigines to comprehend our language, compose a spelling book and translate the psalter into their own! Go on, good men, to teach our red brethren, tillage and



the care of cattle. Where the furrowed land shows the dominion of the plough, and the fleeced sheep the careful application of the sheers, there is enough to persuade us that they who have travelled thus far, will not stop until they have reached a much higher stage of refinement.

Here, however, another and an enchanting scene discloses itself. A compendious, and cheap manner of instruction, which differs almost as much from the old plan as wholesale does from haberdashery, or the maneuvers by regiments from the individual drill. This is the result of a happy disposition and classification ; as a part of which the active faculties of the pupils are engaged as far as practicable, and the passive and drowsy course superceded. Attention, and memory and obedience and method, are all put in requisition. Idleness and playfulness and mischief are instantly detected. The school of Lancaster may be compared to a machine that saves labour, time and material ; performing much work in a rapid manner, with small waste. By the introduction of a just economy, signal advantages accrue. Or it may be illustrated by the analogy of the solar system : for the master is the sun or great centre ; the monitors are the planets receiving from him their power and influence ; while the children are the satellites obeying the direction and impulse communicated by their respective secondary orbs. All the parts are so connected as to make a well ordered whole.—As far as the mode can be applied, *it is admirable.* They who take elementary les-

sons in this way, will generally acquire the aptitude to learn much more. And, as schools of this class are powerful aids of a free press, I consider them eminently useful in laying the foundation upon which rational liberty rests.

The place upon which this city (Schenectady) stands, furnishes an ample theme for contemplation. Here, and in the region situated to the westward, lived the once formidable confederacy of the Iroquois, of whom the Mohocks were the most distinguished. They appear to have descended from the Tartars of Asia ; and by gradual approaches from the shores of Alaska to have reached the country situated south of the great lakes. They brought the complexion, features and manners of their ancestors, and even their dogs are of the Siberian breed. They are called Indians either because they resembled the inhabitants of India, or because they were supposed to have descended from India. Between these ferocious hordes, and the white settlers on the other, the unfortunate Delawares, who were probably tinctured with Malay blood, were beaten as metal between the anvil and hammer, or broken to pieces, after the manner of grain betwixt the mill-stones. Yet, in this very spot, where barbarous, and even cannibal rites have been performed, Schenectady soon arose, and in less than two centuries has grown to its present population and wealth. *Schenectadea*, or the pine-wood landing ; *Cohoke-sackie*, or the land of owls ; *Senagahat*, or the stinging road ; *Canajoharie*, or the place where the

water of the creek whirls like the simmering of a cauldron over the fire ; *Kahohalatea*, the river since called Hudson ; *Oghnawaganagantle*, the spot where we are now sitting ; *Tioghsaronde*, the place where rivers or streams empty into others, and *Can-neoglononitade*, the river that glides along toward its precipice at the Cohos, are a few of the appellations that remain. *Attiaox*, or the destroyer of castles, is the name given to your orator on his reception among the Onondagas, as an adopted brother. The historian traces with seriousness the spot where the pious Barclay strove to win the savages to his mild religion ; where the politic Johnson enlisted them against the hostile arms of France ; and where the patriotic Herkimer and his detachment were surprized and slain. So scanty and evanescent are the vestiges of these events, it is a matter of no inconsiderable research to find them out.

And this is no subject for wonder. Instead of dwelling on the past time, we are engaged more profitably in the present. Lo ! where that noble edifice towers above the river and the plain, and opens its doors to all qualified persons who seek admission. Come, sons and heirs of freedom and learning, and imbibe the sentiments befitting your high destiny, from their pure source. Drink your fill of this delicious draught, and if your appetite should not be satiated, drink again. You will find it more invigorating and exhilarating than the nectar and ambrosia, celebrated in your books. *Alma-mater will love and cherish her children during life ;*

and will honour their memory after departure. From her, they will receive, whatever they wish, that invaluable medicine, the  $\psi\chi\chi\eta\varsigma$   $\iota\alpha\tau\rho\iota\kappa\eta$ , or physick for the soul.

The season, almost the year in which we live is distinguished by the voluntary establishment of an academy for language and belles-letters. Its officers are some of the most learned and virtuous of our citizens, throughout the union. The constitution and design are liberal. The premiums already offered for certain elementary essays and tracts are calculated to stimulate research and elicit talent. Should this association succeed in compiling a correct dictionary and practical grammar of our actual language, they will have done well. If they shall possess authority enough to settle the legitimacy, orthography and pronunciation of words, they will attain a very important object. No society, of the kind ever accomplished so much.

As a practical illustration of my theme, the fraternity to whom I have the delight of discoursing, is gathered under the wings of their affectionate parent. The scene brings to my recollection, things long forgotten, or buried deep under the mass of recent occurrences. Once more I ascend Acropolis and survey Athens stretching between its long walls to the Piræus. Attica lies in broad and cultivated expanse around me ; where by night the bird of Minerva proves by his shout that he watches while other creatures are asleep ; and by day, *the heedless peasant is with difficulty induced to in-*

dicare the field of Marathon, where the Persian invaders were destroyed. Plato, sublime and ardent, yonder instructs his academics in the grove. Zeno, proud and lofty, teaches the stern doctrines of the porch to his stoics. Aristotle, extraordinary individual, who to almost unparalleled industry united singular opportunities, walks the border of the Ilissus, attended by his peripatetics. Pinder's odes on the public games of Greece, come unbidden to my mind. Demosthenes utters vehement orations to the assemblies, before the charge was made, that his voice pretended to have been impaired by a quincy, was in reality silenced by a bribe from Ec-batara. The speech of Paul, the zealous, the acute and intrepid, in the Areopagus, rushes upon me, with a sort of instant vibration.—I endeavour to banish these thoughts, but find it impossible, until I shall have observed Socrates, a moralist more pure than prudent, expiring under a dose of poisonous hemlock ; and Aristides, just as he was, so tenacious of popularity, that he preferred ostracism to voluntary retirement.

In the hyperbole of Milton, the eloquence of those days,

Wielded at will the fierce democracy,  
Shook the arsenal ; thundered over Greece  
To Macedon, and Artaxerxes' throne.

Horace, on the Grecian models wrote,

Nocturna versate manu, versate diurna.

It is yours, gentlemen of the Phi-Beta-Kappa, to  
~~be distinguished~~ by these attainments ; which ex-

alt their possessor in the moral and intellectual consideration. As much will you labor to excel in elegance and taste. You will add the *Το πριπ* to the *το καθηκον*, and embellish right with decorum. You will practice the art of giving to your words the force of laconic brevity, or the poignancy of attic salt. With philosophy at the helm, you will navigate in safety the ocean of life.

It is a matter of peculiarity and regret, that as yet our country and people, have no proper geographical names. United States is a political term, and depends upon the duration of the connection. United States of America is now equally applicable to the confederacies of the south. Columbia is assumed by the independent governments rising north of Guiana and Brazil. Anglo-American is too broad, and applies equally to the Canadian and West Indian settlements. As the national government has hitherto neglected this important subject, it may be worth the while for literary men to propose a name, and recommend it to the people for adoption.

Permit me, after having uttered these sentiments on the past and the present, to offer a few conjectures on the future. You may term them, if you please, phantasms of the sight or idols of the brain, (*Φαντασματα και ιδωλα*) yet I take delight in indulging them.

Ten millions and upwards of freemen are now in the possession of a government, prepared by themselves. This, as it is composed of a constitution

and statutes, treaties and resolves, they can alter and amend according to their sense of propriety.

Within a term of twenty-five years or less, the number of people will amount to twenty millions or more, trained to inveterate habits of liberty, almost as hard to change as their physical organization. They all speak, and will continue to speak, the English tongue. This, though formerly restricted to the British islands, has become one of the most important vehicles of intelligence. Its value will grow with our numbers. Authors, whether in prose or poetry, may rejoice that their English compositions will be extensively understood without a translation. Was Alexander Pope alive, here among us now, he would feel no regret that the verses to which he had entrusted his fame, were written in a dialect understood by so small a portion of the human race.

In this language is recorded as much knowledge of things important for man, as in any other, much more than in most. The ease of communicating with the English nation and their books, places us in a situation greatly preferable to that of speaking a different tongue ; for every chapter and sentence is perfectly accessible. With this vast advantage, it becomes me to mention, the improved intercourse between the two hemispheres. The line of packets between New-York and Liverpool constitutes a very important link in the chain of modern improvements. These admirable ships may be considered ~~as~~ *making a more complete connection between the*

different parts of the civilized world, than has ever been achieved, or could be effected in any other way. Great, intelligent and enterprising, the English and their allied nations, present us a thousand matters worthy to be learned or imitated. I think the Anglo-Saxon blood, some of the best in Europe. It is one of the instances of my good fortune to be tinctured with it. I like myself the better for such lineage and descent.

A radical similarity in their laws ; the principles of representation ; the elective franchise ; the trial by jury, in civil as well as in criminal cases ; the right of bearing arms ; the freedom of conscience, not by toleration, but by religious equality ; the love of reading and the curiosity for news ; a deference to the rights and opinions of others, accompany these citizens in all their wanderings and locations.

As the forest yields to fire and steel, roads, bridges and canals pervade the land, rendering intercourse safe, cheap and easy. Social feeling is thereby sustained ; man becomes better acquainted with his fellow-creature, and a stranger ceases to be viewed as an enemy. Produce is conveyed more conveniently to market. Mutual dependences create the means as well as the desire of satisfying mutual wants. A common interest pervades society ; and the different members become so braced and dove-tailed together, that it is difficult or impossible to separate them. The canal connecting the



ocean with the lakes outdoes the enterprizes of Egypt and France.

A solemn regard to the education of their offspring will accompany them wherever they go.— The rudiments of beneficial literature and art, will be instilled early into their minds. The ornamental branches in due season and progression. High science will gradually succeed. Every vegetable will respond to its name, and tell its excellent or noxious qualities. Ores and rocks shall rise from the bottom of the mine and descend from the top of the mountain, and arrange themselves in museums. The species of the animal race shall approach and ask the lord of the soil to notice and know them. Even the extinct and nameless beings entombed in antedeluvian graves, or embalmed in the catacombs of nature, shall undergo a resurrection and be enrolled in history. The traces of human labour and settlement left by the vanished nations who have preceded us, will court delineation and description. It would scarcely be saying too much, if I should represent the roaming beasts under some modern Orpheus, laying aside their savage tempers ; the stones under a new Amphion piling themselves into walls ; the wilderness under the Ceres of the west transforming itself into Sicilian farms and gardens ; and our citizens, under abler legislators than Solon and Lycurgus, associating themselves into states.

In orderly and rapid succession, the mill, the *school house*, the court house, and the church,

show themselves in selected spots. As soon as circumstances permit, the academy, the college and the university follow. In some of these, your Phi-Beta-Kappa will be adopted by the candidates for exalted scholarship and pre-eminent attainments in classical learning. A beginning will be made, as in your own example, with Alpha. But I see, or seem to see, the societies, as they are instituted one after another, taking their title from the successive letters of the column, until they arrive at Omega. Every where will appear the mighty march of mind. The grand destiny of this people disregards the misrepresentations of the ignorant, the perversions of the prejudiced, and the calumnies of the envious. Let one foreign dunce abuse us in his book; and another applaud it in reviews: They do us no harm. They but prove their own lowness and insignificancy. So have I seen too sturdy beetles in a path, boring the ground and stealing manure. They roll with peculiar art—one pushing and the other pulling, their new-made ball, which is precious above all things to them. The former considers the damage too trifling for resentment; and although he could crush the vermin with his foot, permits them to live, proud and happy, in their filthy employment. Thanks to Luther and the other protestants, for the religious emancipation of a portion of the human race. From that portion, the people of these United States have principally descended. The perfection of their civil liberty proceeds from the same source. Where a hierar-

chy prevails, there is little room for a democracy. Speculate as we will on the efforts to establish freedom where the Greek and Roman churches have sway, daily observation teaches, that the revolutionists, though they may be very good christians, are very indifferent republicans. I would therefore advise them, as a hearty well-wisher to their cause, to begin their noble schemes of revolution by adopting the reformed religion.

Finally. I see correct morality accompanying increased knowledge. My definition of a devil is, "a rational being destitute of virtue." The prince of devils is distinguished from the rest, by possessing superior intelligence, without moral principle. Man resembles the infernal spirits when he cultivates understanding at the expense of the heart. He approaches celestial perfection, by adding goodness to greatness. This mixture of qualities dignifies our nature. The time is approaching, when vices shall be less frequent and glaring ; when misdemeanors shall be the consequence of mistake, rather than of perverse intention ; and when crimes shall be avoided from their ugliness as well as their turpitude.

Hasten, O come quickly, thou season of expectation, when the proficient in benign letters and arts, doctors of philosophy, with harps and timbrels in their hands, and with crowns of bay and glory on their heads, shall, during their stay in this world, *experience a true foretaste of the next !*